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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-second session
Items 37, 53 and 148 of the
preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
CONSEQUENCES OF THE IRAQI OCCUPATION OF AND AGGRESSION AGAINST KUWAIT
UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 2 June 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a press communiqué issued by the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council at its sixty-third session, held in Riyadh on 31 May 1997 under the chairmanship of His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassem Bin Jabr Al Thani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 37, 53 and 148 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nasser Bin Hamad AL-KHALIFA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/52/50.

ANNEX

Press communiqué issued on 31 May 1997 by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Arab Gulf States

The Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council held its sixty-third regular session on Saturday, 25 Muharram A.H. 1418 (31 May 1997) at the headquarters of its secretariat in Riyadh, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassem Bin Jabr Al Thani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar. The meeting was attended by:

His Excellency Mr. Rashid Bin Abdullah al-Nuaimi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates;

His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain;

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia;

His Excellency Mr. Yousef Bin Alawi Bin Abdullah, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman; and

His Excellency Abd al-Aziz Dakhil al-Dakhil, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs of Kuwait.

His Excellency Sheikh Jamil Ibrahim al-Hegelan, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, also attended.

The Ministerial Council studied developments in the joint cooperation process and political and security situations and issues at regional and international levels since its sixty-second session, held in March 1997.

Iraq's compliance with the Security Council resolutions relating to its aggression against Kuwait

The Ministerial Council discussed developments in Iraq's compliance with the Security Council resolutions relating to its aggression against Kuwait. The Ministerial Council reaffirmed its absolute and unwavering belief in Iraq's obligation to comply with all the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular those pertaining to the release of Kuwaiti and third-country prisoners and detainees; cooperate fully with the Special Commission in its investigation of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction; return all public and private property to Kuwait; continue to comply fully with the compensation mechanism; and refrain from all hostile or provocative acts directed against Kuwait and neighbouring States, pursuant to resolution 949 (1994).

The Council expressed its satisfaction with the improvement in the living and health conditions of the fraternal Iraqi people and the alleviation of their suffering resulting from the implementation of the "oil for food" Security Council resolution 986 (1995).

The Ministerial Council reaffirmed the willingness of its member States to continue to provide absolute support for the efforts of the United Nations Special Commission in uncovering Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and called upon the international community to do likewise. It expressed its appreciation of the sterling endeavours of Mr. Rolf Ekéus during his chairmanship of the Commission, and welcomed Mr. Butler, his replacement as Chairman, wishing him every success in his work.

The incursion into Iraqi territory by Turkish forces

Pursuant to the positions adopted by States members of the Council, founded on the obligation to preserve the independence, sovereignty and territorial unity and integrity of Iraq, the Council expressed its profound disquiet with respect to recent Turkish military operations and the incursion into northern Iraq, the repercussions of these developments on security and stability in the region and the threat they posed to international peace and security. The Ministerial Council called upon the Turkish Government to pull back its forces to a position outside Iraq's international borders and to refrain from intervening in the internal affairs of that country.

The issue of the occupation of the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates and relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran

(a) The issue of the occupation of the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates

The Ministerial Council studied developments in the matter of the occupation of the three islands of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates. The Council noted that the Iranian Government continued to implement measures aimed at consolidating its occupation of the three islands, carrying to extremes the policy of using force to impose the status quo. This represents a determination to proceed with its unjustified and provocative actions. The Council reiterated its deep regret at the continuing failure of the Islamic Republic of Iran to respond to the repeated sincere and serious invitations to seek a solution to this issue by peaceful means offered by the United Arab Emirates and regional and international organizations and groups. The Ministerial Council expressed its disapproval of the successive measures taken by Iran in the islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates and its continuing concern as to the results of the Iranian Government's extremism in pursuing the policy of using force to impose the status quo in the three islands of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, in violation of the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates and in encroachment of the latter's rights in these islands. Peace and security in the region are threatened thereby, and the principles and precepts of international law and the Charters of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference completely disregarded, together with the principles of good-neighbourliness and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States of the region.

The Council reaffirmed the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over the three islands of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa and its absolute support for all the peaceful measures being taken to recover its sovereignty

over these islands. The Council reiterated its appeal to the Iranian Government to end its occupation of the three islands, suspend its policy of using force to impose the status quo, halt construction of all Iranian installations on the islands intended to alter the demographic structure and remove any existing installations, annul any unilateral decisions already imposed on the three islands and employ peaceful means to resolve the conflict over them in accordance with the principles and rules of international law, which would include accepting that the matter could be dealt with by the International Court of Justice.

(b) Relations with Iran

The Ministerial Council discussed recent developments in relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. On the basis of its firm position that it wishes to build stable relations with Iran based on good-neighbourliness, mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs, and in the light of the outcome of the Iranian presidential elections, the Council expresses its hope that the coming period will witness a positive development in relations between States members of the Council and Iran and trusts that the Islamic Republic of Iran will take palpable steps along the proper path towards building confidence and establishing relations between the two sides, which will achieve the security, stability, welfare and prosperity of the peoples of the region.

The peace process in the Middle East

The Ministerial Council observed with great concern the continuing deadlock and deterioration of the peace process in the Middle East and the growing danger of its imminent breakdown as a result of the arbitrary policies and provocative practices pursued by the Israeli Government, with its insistence on building a new settlement in Jerusalem, expanding settlements in the occupied Arab territories and reneging on its commitments relating to the implementation of agreements signed with the Palestinian Authority. On the basis of its well-known, firm position, the Ministerial Council reaffirms its condemnation of the irresponsible policies and illegal practices of the Israeli Government and affirms that in order to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace between the Arabs and Israel, Israel must adhere to the spirit and the letter of all the agreements that have been signed and accept as fully binding the authority of the Madrid peace mechanism, the principle of land for peace and the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), to ensure the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, to enable the Palestinian people to exercise all its national rights, including the right to the establishment of an independent State in its own national territory with Jerusalem as its capital, and to ensure full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, southern Lebanon and western Bekaa.

The Council reiterated its call to the administration of the United States of America to make additional efforts and show effective leadership that reflects its firm commitment to achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region, thereby maintaining its role as sponsor of the peace process in the Middle East in accordance with the foundations, principles and guarantees agreed

at the Madrid Peace Conference on the Middle East, as well as with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The Council also expressed its appreciation for the efforts of the Arab Republic of Egypt to salvage the peace process and to resume the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, as well as for the efforts of the European Union with its ten-point peace plan to move the peace process forward out of the deadlock and acute crisis which it is experiencing.

The Council also affirmed the need for Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to place all its nuclear installations under the international inspection regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Progress made in joint work

The Ministerial Council considered the decisions and recommendations of the Committee on Financial and Economic Cooperation, the Committee of Ministers of Communications, the Committee of Ministers for the Environment and the Committee of Ministers of Youth and Sports, together with the conclusions of the meeting of the Supreme Council for the follow-up of resolutions on joint defence and military cooperation aimed at strengthening cooperation among States members of the Council and at adopting the necessary recommendations and resolutions.